



MEDIA RELEASE

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Pioneer Company Receives Workplace Safety Award *International Paper's Royal Blue Chip Mill Best in Safety*

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administrator John Winkler, on behalf of Governor Phil Bredesen, today awarded International Paper's Royal Blue Chip Mill in Pioneer the **VOLUNTEER STAR Award**. The **VOLUNTEER Safety through Accountability and Recognition (STAR) Award** is the state's highest honor for workplace safety and health and a nationally recognized program.

Administrator John Winkler congratulated International Paper's employees during the ceremony held at the Pioneer company. "The evaluation criteria for the STAR award are ambitious. All employees at the Royal Blue Chip Mill play a major role in worksite analysis, hazard recognition and control and training. They work hard to meet and exceed the rigorous standards the award requires," said Winkler.

This is the second award for International Paper. The Memphis Customer Commitment Center received the STAR certification in 1998. This facility in Pioneer purchases pulpwood and produces hardwood chips for International Paper mills in the southeast and Blue Ridge Paper in Canton, North Carolina.

The main objective for participation in the STAR program is the improvement of a company's safety and health program, which helps reduce accidents and injuries. The program also allows employers to be removed from programmed compliance inspection lists for a period of three years. TOSHA consultants work with companies through the internal and external review that is part of the application process.

For more information on the VOLUNTEER STAR Award program, contact TOSHA's Consultative Services office at 1-800-325-9901. (03-095)

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